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Agency Secretary  
Cal/EPA



## Department of Toxic Substances Control

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1011 North Grandview Avenue  
Glendale, California 91201



Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

January 23, 2006

Dr. Daniel Wiseman, Chairman  
Dayton Canyon Ad Hoc Committee  
West Hills Neighborhood Council

### **CENTEX HOMES – STERLING PROPERTY WEST OF VALLEY CIRCLE BOULEVARD AT ROSCOE BOULEVARD, WEST HILLS, CALIFORNIA**

Dear Dr. Wiseman,

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is pleased to provide you with an update on the status of the investigation of the subject property. In August 2005, Centex Homes (Centex), the project proponent, and DTSC entered into a Voluntary Cleanup Agreement (VCA) to conduct Preliminary Endangerment Assessments (PEA(s)) on portions of the property identified as DC-North, DC-South, DC-West, and the area encompassing Dayton Canyon Creek. The work in the area encompassing Dayton Canyon Creek included additional site characterization, a Removal Action Workplan and subsequent removal of perchlorate contamination based on the results of previous investigations. Centex retained the services of Allwest Remediation, Inc. (Allwest) to conduct the investigation under DTSC oversight.

#### **Investigation to Date**

As indicated in the PEA Workplan, soil samples and soil gas samples were collected and analyzed from randomly selected grids in DC-North, DC-South and DC-West from September 2005 to January 2006. All soil samples were analyzed for perchlorate and metals concentrations. A selected number of soil samples were analyzed for Hydrazine and Dioxins. Hydrazine and Dioxins were not detected in any of the samples. Soil-gas samples analyzed for 24 volatile organic compounds (VOCs) did not detect any VOCs.

#### *DC-North, DC-South and DC-West*

In one soil sample in DC-North (Sample B-4 at 1 foot below ground surface), perchlorate was detected at a concentration of 332 parts per million (ppm) or milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg). Additional step-out sampling was conducted to delineate the extent of contamination. Perchlorate was not detected in any of the step out samples or in any of the other samples collected in DC-North.

Perchlorate was detected near the southern tributary in DC-West at a concentration of 73 mg/kg in sample SCC2 at 3 feet below ground surface. This was the only perchlorate detection in DC-West. Additional step-out sampling was conducted in the area around sample SCC2 to delineate the extent of contamination. Perchlorate was not detected in any of the step out samples or in any of the other samples collected in DC-West.

#### *Lower Creek*

Samples were collected in the lower creek bed to provide delineation of perchlorate that had been detected within the lower creek during previous sampling efforts. Perchlorate was detected in several samples taken from the lower creek area, with concentrations ranging from non-detect to 2,110 mg/kg. These analytical results were used in conjunction with the previous sampling to identify areas that needed to be addressed in the proposed Time Critical Removal Action Plan.

#### *Upper Creek*

On January 12, 2006, Allwest and DTSC collected soil samples from Dayton Canyon Creek within the Centex property between the SSFL eastern property boundary and the private parcel's western property boundary. Allwest and DTSC analytical results indicate that perchlorate was not detected in any of the soil samples. Please note that the Workplan proposed collection of samples from 8 locations from the upper creek approximately every 500 feet. Samples were collected from 4 locations only because access to enter the private parcels could not be obtained, despite numerous efforts.

#### **Time Critical Removal Action**

On December 7, 2005, DTSC held a public meeting to present a Time Critical Removal Action Work Plan to remove areas of known perchlorate contamination in Dayton Creek prior to significant rainfall. During the meeting the community requested time to review and comment on the Time Critical Removal Action Workplan. DTSC agreed to delay the implementation of this workplan until the beginning of the year. In early January 2006, approximately 3 inches of rain in the area caused a significant flow of water within the creek. Since perchlorate is very soluble in water, DTSC was concerned that the rain may have caused the contamination to migrate. Therefore, on January 4 and 5, 2006, DTSC and Allwest collected soil samples from the areas identified for soil removal in the Time Critical Removal Action Work Plan. Surface water samples were also collected in areas where water enters and exits the Sterling property. Overall, five surface water samples (three by DTSC and two by Allwest) and eighteen soil samples (nine by DTSC and nine by Allwest) were collected on these two days. The sample locations are shown on the attached map.

Laboratory analytical testing did not detect perchlorate in any of the samples collected by Centex. Analytical results from samples independently collected and analyzed by DTSC were consistent with Centex's results. Since perchlorate was not detected in any of the surface samples collected in the creek area, the proposed time critical removal action is no longer necessary at this time.

### **Additional Investigation**

Due to recent weather conditions, DTSC will request preparation of a Supplemental Sampling Plan (SSP) to investigate the Lower Creek area to evaluate how the rain and surface water runoff has impacted known areas of perchlorate contamination. The SSP will be made available to the public for review and comment. It is anticipated that implementation of the SSP will occur in late March or early April upon the conclusion of the rainy season. In addition to evaluating perchlorate concentrations and distribution within the creek bed sediments, the SSP will include a proposal to drill borings, on the order of 30 to 40 feet deep, to collect soil and groundwater samples from the areas near the creek. At the completion of the site wide investigation, a Removal Action Workplan (RAW) will be prepared and made available for public review and comment.

### **Radiological Investigation**

Please note that the investigation to determine if radioactive contamination exists on the property has not been implemented. The workplan dated November 22, 2005; Section 3.3 Radiological Testing indicates that DTSC will consult with United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Department of Health Services (DHS) in developing a Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) to address radiological testing. A Draft SAP was submitted to DTSC by Allwest on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2005.

Although the SAP describes specific procedures for conducting the survey it emphasizes the need for establishing background levels. DTSC is waiting for results of the radiological survey that was conducted at the site in October 2005 to develop background levels. Once these levels are established they will be identified in the draft SAP. Changes will then be made to the draft SAP and the document will be posted on the website to allow for public review and comment.

The results obtained from the survey will be statistically evaluated to establish background radiation levels. Once these background levels are established they will be compared to background radiation levels used by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, EPA, Department of Energy and other local sources. The radiological investigation will not proceed until DTSC has determined the appropriate background levels for the Site.

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### **Conclusions**

At this time, without having completed the site wide investigation we are unable to determine the source of perchlorate. However we would like to emphasize that DTSC has not ruled out any potential source for the perchlorate contamination at the Site.

DTSC is committed to sharing all available information with the community. As soon as new information becomes available, DTSC will be posting it on our website at [www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Projects/Centex.cfm](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Projects/Centex.cfm). We encourage members of the public to contact us with any questions regarding the investigation and cleanup of the Site. Please contact Jose Diaz at (818) 551-2171, Rita Kamat at (818) 551-2831 or Yvette LaDuke at (818) 551-2909.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. Kamat for". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sayareh Amir, Branch Chief  
Southern California Cleanup Operations

Attachment